

Spring Volunteers

*PERSIMMON GAP

Joan & Jack Lamkin-Visitor Center
Terry Purvis-Visitor Center

*RIO GRANDE VILLAGE

Barbara & Bill Baldwin-Campground Hosts
Nancy & Ed Bump (new)-Campground Hosts
Nancy Dickerson & Ken Fields-Backcountry
Sam & Erv Drabek-Backcountry
Denise & John Curd-Visitor Center
Lee & Joe Pytel-Visitor Center

*CASTOLON

Samantha Schroeder-Campground Host/Backcountry
Steve Harper-Campground Host/Backcountry
Mark Kirtley-Visitor Center
Stan Amick (new)-Visitor Center

*BASIN

Kay & Doug Combs (new)-Campground Hosts
Susan & Gary Esser (new)-Campground Hosts
Dori & Tom Ramsay-Visitor Center

*PANTHER JUNCTION

Scarlett & Bob Wirt-Science/Resource Management
Bud Frankenberger-Science/Resource Management
Diane & Gary Frable-River
Don Janes-Interpretative
Victoria Summy (new)-Volunteer Assistant
Joseph Webb (new)-Science/Resource Management
& Maintenance

Nancy Daniel-Science/Resource Management
Greg Levandoski-Science /Resource Management

*PART-TIME VOLUNTEERS

Judy Brinkerhoff-Science/Resource Management
John Davies-Visitor Protection
Meghan Hicks-Interpretation
Steve Wick-Archeology
Reine Wonite-Administration



**New Volunteer
Orientation
Happenings & Mishaps!
2005**



New Volunteer Orientation Spring, 2005

Spring Volunteer Training for 10 volunteers and 4 SCA's was held January 31-February 11, 2005. Everyday was filled with activities that stretched both our minds and our bodies.

With topics from cultural resources, hazardous waste, exotic plants (which we learned are not really exotic but invasive), Texas mammals, geology, and much more, we went home everyday with our heads spinning. There were so many new topics to interpret for ourselves and visitors we would soon meet.

Physical challenges came in the form of active investigations of special sites such as Hot Springs and the Old Ore Road; canoeing on the Rio Grande River, and the 13 mile hike to the South Rim. Many of us had some sore muscles and even a few bruises to show for our efforts! But what fun we had and memories to keep!

Thank you to Mary Kay Manning and all the staff for planning and implementing our orientation to Big Bend! We all agreed our confidence and knowledge increased tremendously. As volunteers we are now prepared to "protect the resources and provide information" to the visitors



Tidbits...

The Montana State Department of Fish and Wildlife is advising hikers, hunters and fishermen to take extra precautions and keep alert for grizzly bear while in Yellowstone Park and surrounding areas.

They advise people to wear low noise-producing devices such as little bells on their clothing to alert but not startle the grizzly bears unexpectedly.

They also advise carrying pepper spray in case of an encounter with an grizzly bear.

It is also a good idea to watch for fresh signs of grizzly activity—People should recognize the difference between small, young grizzly and large, adult grizzly droppings.

Young droppings are smaller and contain fish bones, possibly bird feathers and small mammal fur.

Adult grizzly droppings have little bells in them and smell like pepper spray!!



THANK YOU!

Thank you to Martha King and her group for providing the fantastic treats for our volunteer orientation. We enjoyed every morsel and looked forward to those special trays



Looking back to **January-2005 Events...**Volunteer Awards Night & Pizza.. Chili Cook-off....New volunteers beginning orientation.



New Volunteer SCA's

The Student Conservation Association (SCA) provides college students and other adults with meaningful conservation service internships and volunteer opportunities in our National Parks, Forests and other public lands. The motto of SCA is "changing lives through service to nature". During the spring season Big Bend staff is pleased to welcome SCA's: Dorita Brady, Susie Douglas, Lauren Seidman and Steven Boyle.

Hiking opportunities and the location attracted Dorita Brady to Big Bend. Dorita Brady is from Tucson, Arizona and formerly taught high school history. Dorita also had experience working at Canyonlands National Park. In her free time, Dorita enjoys horseback riding, backpacking, fishing and politics. Dorita has a son who is a senior in high school and a daughter in college.

Susie Douglas finds the Big Bend landscape completely different from her home town of Marion, Iowa. The SCA website peaked Susie's curiosity and she applied to come to Big Bend. Susie majored in liberal arts and is interested in pursuing a career in environmental education or the park service. Hobbies for Susie are hiking, music, and backpacking and just looking for that "next great adventure".

In May, Lauren Seidman graduated from Smith College with a major in geology and minor in politics. Her next academic venture will be graduate school. Lauren's hometown is Westfield, Indiana. Competitive swimming has been a love of Lauren's for the past 14 years. This is Lauren's first trip to Big Bend and she is amazed at the diversity of the landscape, plants and animals.

Steven Boyle is from Conroe, Texas. Recently, Steven worked as an SCA in the Berkshires Forest in Hawley, Massachusetts. An avid hiker, Steven has hiked almost 1000 miles of the Appalachian Trail as well as trips across Yellowstone and parts of the northwest. Hobbies for Steven are music, hiking and writing.

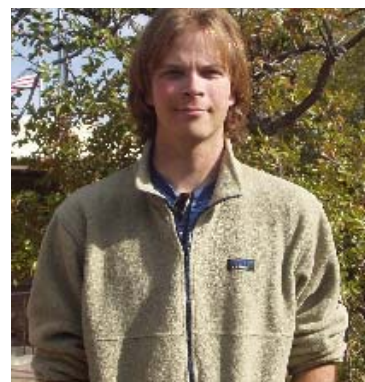
During the next few months you will see SCA's Dorita, Susie and Lauren working in the visitor centers, "shadowing" staff, and also presenting their own interpretative programs. Steven will be at Castolon doing patrols on trails and backcountry and resource management. Please stop to say "hello" and get to know these great volunteers!

Dorita helps visitors with planning their backcountry camping trip.



Library research on the topic "using plants for medicinal purposes" keeps Susie busy.

Lauren checks websites for the latest information on a special geology topic.



Steven gives encouragement to other volunteers during our 13 mile hike to the South Rim.

Meet New Volunteers

Nancy & Ed Bump

RGV Campground Hosts



When Nancy and Ed received that special telephone call from David Van Inwagen asking if they would like to be campground hosts at Big Bend, they didn't hesitate before they said, "Yes!" Ed and Nancy became interested in volunteering at Big Bend when, on a previous visit, they met Basin campground hosts Les and Dana Over on the Lost Mine Trail.

Nancy and Ed, along with their schnauzer dog Zachary, have been fulltime RV travelers for the past several years. In their "working life", Nancy was a high school business education teacher in Spokane, Washington and Ed, who is a CPA, taught at several universities in Arizona, Missouri and Cheney, Washington.

Ed, who had two daughters when he met Nancy, says, "The best thing that happened to me and the girls was to have Nancy come into our lives!" Now grown, Jennifer, who has 2 businesses, and her husband live in London, England, and daughter Becky, who is a CPA, lives in Palo Alto, California.

Hobbies for Ed are fly fishing, hiking and exploring. Nancy also enjoys hiking and has a goal of doing a "Volkswalk" in every state capital. You may wonder, "What is a Volkswalk"? A volksmarch is a non-competitive 6 mile (10 kilometer) walk. It's not a pledge walk, it's not a race, it is a fun activity you do with a club, with your family, with your pet, or all by yourself. Volksmarching got its name from its origins in Europe. Today there are thousands of volkssport clubs around the world. There are over 350 volkssport clubs throughout the USA, and many thousands around the world. Local clubs host the walking events. The club members select a trail for safety, scenic interest, historic areas, natural beauty and walkability. They then invite everyone to come and enjoy it on a weekend or a weekday evening.

With friendly smiles and a welcoming way, Nancy and Ed are just the kind of people you would like to meet when looking for a campsite. Nancy and Ed like to help other campers and make them feel at ease by engaging them in conversation. Since campground hosting is still new to Ed and Nancy, they are glad to be working with Barbara and Bill Baldwin and gain insight from the Baldwin's many years of experience.

During their days off, Ed and Nancy like to explore the various trails in the park and also visit with other volunteers and park staff. Nancy and Ed are also curious and want to learn more about the park. Just yesterday, your roving reporter caught them attending Mark Flippo's program and learning how to become "birders"!

Welcome to Big Bend, Nancy and Ed. We are glad you are here!



“The Best Bird”

What is the best bird? The one in you are looking at in your binoculars! Several of the volunteers joined Ranger Mark Flippo and 30 park visitors at 8:00 a.m. on February 22 at Daniels Ranch to learn more about birds and birders. We all wanted to get some tips on identifying some of the resident and migrant species found in the Big Bend.



First off we learned what gear we should have with us for successful bird watching. (And like most hobbies, the more interested you become the more “stuff” you acquire and the more you want to spend!)



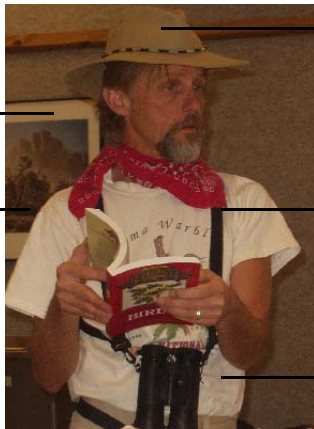
bandana

stylish hat

t-shirt with
birds or bird
logos

as many bird books as
you can carry

binoculars & “bra”
strap apparatus



Next we learned how to identify a bird after sighting a bird. What clues can we look for? Color? Markings? Size of bill? Tail? Location of bird? Behavior? Food? Flight pattern? Call? Ranger Flippo reminded us to try to put the clues together before we rushed to an answer or began to randomly look in our bird books.

A bird was sighted and the task of identification began. Opinions from the group were being voiced—some more emphatically than others! Some of us just wanted Ranger Flippo to “tell us” but we had to put our clues together! The first bird identified was a Vermilion flycatcher! Wow! This was exciting to be able to identify a bird other than a robin! In the next 2 hours some of the birds we identified were: golden fronted woodpecker, yellow warbler, black phoebe, cedar wax-wing, and Mexican mallard duck.



In conclusion, Ranger Flippo reminded us that birding is fun and a great way to get to know Big Bend. Places to look for birds are: PJ Visitor Center, Hot Springs, Juniper Flats, Sam Nail Ranch, Homer Wilson Ranch and Basin Campground. And remember, the “best bird” is the one you are “looking at in your binoculars”!



February Volunteer Potluck

Judging from the sounds of laughter, smiles and array of wonderful food offerings, the February Volunteer Potluck was a great success! Some of the delicious dishes were stuffed jalapeno peppers, chicken enchiladas, tamales, bar-b-ques, "Watergate" cake, and much more! Some comments overheard were: "I always look forward to eating someone else's cooking. What an yummy dish, I want the recipe. It is great to have the time to visit with old and new friends".

After dinner, Supt. John King spoke briefly to thank all the volunteers for their contributions to the many areas of the park. (And all the volunteers also thank all the Big Bend Staff for being so welcoming and complimentary of our efforts.)

Next came a drawing for door prizes which were won by Tom Ramsay and Joan Lamkin. Door prizes of a can of SPAM and a pen (for writing recipes) were significant as the next Volunteer Potluck will be a *SPAMORAMA* on Tuesday, March 1 at 6:30 in the PJ Community Room.

Special thanks to Joseph Webb for setting up tables and others for cleaning up at the end of the evening.

Hope to see everyone at the next potluck!

Volunteer Events/Opportunities

February 25 CPR Training

8:00 a.m. Emergency

Services Building

March 1 VIP 'Spamorama' Potluck

Panther Junction

Community Room - 6:30 p.m.

You may "name" your spam dish & bring the recipe! (Of course other non-spam offerings are welcome.)



Recipes found at
www.spam.com

Come share the fun!!

End of March Volunteer Award Banquet

Panther Junction Community Room

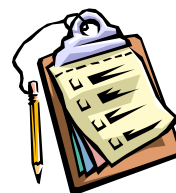
6:00 p.m. Social Time

6:30 p.m. Dinner

April 22-23 Cancer Relay for Life

Contact Meghan Hicks at 477-2419
to sign-up or information.

Volunteer Notes



1. Submit your **Record of Hours Worked** report each month to Angelina or Vicky. Reports are due no later than the third of each month! Thank you

2. Turn in your receipts and reimbursements to Angelina for her signature. It will take at least a week for your check to be processed. Check with Terry Boren, Administrative Officer, M-F, 8-5 to receive & sign your check.

3. If you have pictures, items, suggestions and/or corrections for the newsletter, contact Vicky Summy at 477-1195.

4. Do you have an idea for a VIP outing or potluck theme? Contact Vicky at 477-1195.

Thank you!